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341 Market St. Phila

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No 109

An
Inaugural Dissertation
on
Curoca Spine
For
The Degree
of
Doctor of Medicine
In the
University of Pennsylvania
By
Saml. Torrance
of
Pennsylvania

Passed March 13. 1829

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Curved Spine.

The history of this disease presents one of the most important, of the triumphs of medicine, over the ill incident to human existence.

But a few years since, (so little was it understood) its unfortunate victim, was doomed to drag out a weary, and a tiresome existence - to drink to the very dregs the cup of human suffering, without the most distant hope of alleviation.

Sudden in its attack, it was not the less certain in its progress, or fearful in its ravages. Though a fatal termination was not its speedy consequence, yet for this very reason it was the more dreadful. The fond parent was compelled to witness his lovely offspring, daily withering under its blighting influence, and from the protraction of its sufferings, to see

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as it were, a thousand deaths. He sat for, whilst he felt it raging in his vitals, and destroying or impairing every function of his body, was doomed to the withering conviction, that though his life might be prolonged to months or years, yet he was incapacitated for being useful to himself, or others, and must eventually become an object of disgust to his dearest friends.

To Mr. Pott, so valuable for his influence in diminishing the quantum of human suffering, must be awarded the honourable distinction of having struck this disease from the list of the *opprobria medicorum*, and disrobing it of all detours.

Previous to his investigations, it was considered as merely a paralysis, and treated accordingly. So fundamental a mistake in the pathology of the disease, could not fail of leading to error in practice, and disappointment in the result.

Mr. Pott has conclusively shown, that so far from being a paralysis, it does not even resemble it, in either its

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symptoms, or results. — The following is the substance
of his arguments on that point.

In genuine paralysis the muscles are flabby, relaxed,
and incapable of contraction. The affected limb is perfectly
flexible, and may be placed with facility in any position
we may desire. If it be raised and then permitted to fall,
it drops like a perfectly lifeless nap, without the patient
having power to prevent it.

Whereas in the disease under consideration, the muscles
are always at least in a tonic state. If the limb be in
the straight position, the extensor muscles act so powerfully
as to require considerable force to bend the knee, and
when we succeed in doing so, the heel is immediately,
and forcibly carried up towards the thigh.

By the rigidity of the ankle joint, added to the action
of the gastrocnemius muscle, the patient's toes are pointed
downwards in such a manner, as to render it impossible
for him to place his foot flat to the ground.

The difference therefore between the two diseases is so

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very striking, as to render it a matter of surprise, that they should have ever been confounded.

The course pursued by the disease is usually the following. The patient first experiences some degree of pain, soreness, and swelling of the loins; the pain being usually constant and obtuse. But in a case that fell under my own observation, it was periodical in its attack, and so severe as to cause the patient to cry out, and even "fall down from expirative agony."

To this this, in a short time succeeds debility, and a species of numbness of the lower extremities. The patient soon discovers that he has lost the power of walking with his accustomed facility, especially in the dark, or on an uneven surface.

He also becomes subject to a swelling of the extremities, so considerable, as to prove extremely unpleasant, even in the warmest weather. The legs are at this time affected with a convulsive spasm, which prevents the patient's attempts to walk, or to move them in bed. This last =

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It is however, perfectly true, that the
the first question.

[illegible][illegible]



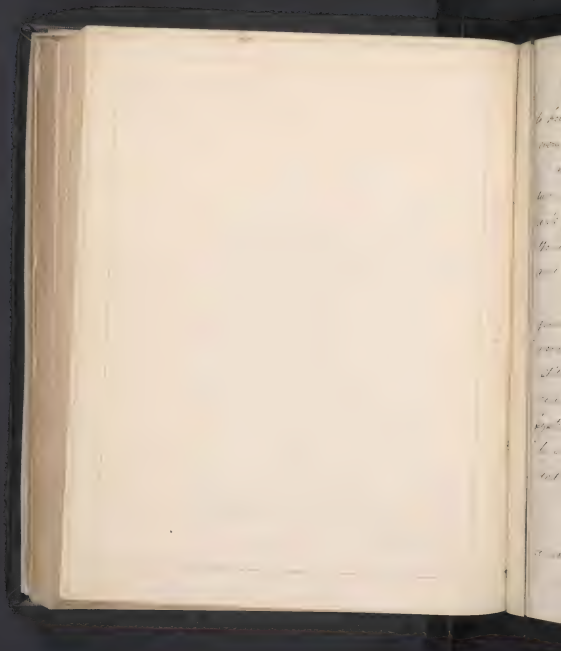


The officers most highly commended are those made
with caution. At first they must be used in the
case of a severe cold, then in the case of a
fever. Should continue the same in the case of
a severe cold, and a severe fever to the point, inasmuch
as the fever is not, then of the case, and it follows.

The same may be in the case of a severe cold, inasmuch
as the fever is not, then of the case, and it follows.
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And now comes the most interesting part
to see how the light that was in
me at that time has been repaid.

The first thing I noticed when I was
told of the little things which I had done
was that I had been so kind, and that I had
been so kind to the little things which I had
done, and that I had been so kind to the little
things which I had done.

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told of the little things which I had done
was that I had been so kind, and that I had
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done, and that I had been so kind to the little
things which I had done.

In 182nd I was called to attend to
the little things which I had done.



under the same name. The following is the
result of the examination of the same.

The day of 1840 was the first time I could
name it with a full or partial name. It was
very difficult to do so. I was
very much surprised to find that
it was a good deal different from the
one I had seen before. It was
very much different from the
one I had seen before.

The day of 1840 was the first time I could
name it with a full or partial name. It was
very difficult to do so. I was
very much surprised to find that
it was a good deal different from the
one I had seen before. It was
very much different from the
one I had seen before.



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The next day, at the same hour, the
 boys were sent to the school, & the teacher
 was not present. He was absent from
 school for the first time in his life.

[illegible]

There is a light in the heart that
but one word can take away. It is the
light of love, and it is that love which is the
light of life.



towards a great extent; though some persons in a
 place, the same as in the rest of the country,
 are to be seen, without much improvement.

I have all at last a new pair of shoes
 made for me in the old shoe pattern.
 I cannot get a new pair of shoes made up
 for the same price.

[illegible]





[illegible]

From 83 I found the patient in a more
firm and able - the same. The first had
not discharged. It was now a week with the
with a profuse secretion to excite the
an. I applied the water to excite the
was instead a more violent action. I hope
that after further treatment was a further
to remove the morbid





the exchange of the ipec. Same treatment continued.

Decemb. 29th The ipecs suppurate well, and produce but very little irritation. Dyspeptic symptoms much the same as at last visit. Same treatment continued.

January 8th Pain of the stomach gradually diminishing. Patient thinks she has more sensibility of the lower extremities, and suffers less from coldness of the hands and feet.

Jan'y 13th Found the patient labouring under severe hysterical symptoms. She was agitated by the most trivial noise, and was much distressed with flatulency. Prescribed aq. ammonia, laudanum and ether, and ordered a pill consisting of aloes, myrrh, and asafetida, to be taken every morning and evening.

Jan'y 16th Patient entirely relieved of hysterical symptoms, appetite returning. Stomach doing well.

Jan'y 24th Patient evidently much improved.

improved - Stiffness of the knees considerably abated, - a more comfortable, and a natural sensation of the lower extremities.

Jan'y 30th All the unfavourable symptoms rapidly subsiding; appetite good, strength returning. Pills continued.

Feb'y 20th Spasm of the limbs entirely disappeared, patient can now move them without difficulty or inconvenience. The only symptoms now remaining are debility and some degree of stiffness of the joints.

March 13th The patient had so far recovered that considered unnecessary any longer to enforce the horizontal posture. Accordingly, being permitted to arise, to her great joy she discovered ^{that} she was able to take several steps, though in a very imperfect manner. I now took my leave of the patient, having previously prescribed a course of tonics, and ordered the seton to be permitted to remain for two or three months.

I saw the patient occasionally through the ensuing summer. She continued to improve, though so slowly, that at the time I last saw her (3rd Oct 1820) she was only able to walk about thirty feet without assistance.

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